Editorial

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NBC's Letter Answering Complaints

We reprint the letter below for the benefit of those who wanted to but did not write to complain to NBC of Johnny Carson's conduct during the District Attorney Jim Garrison guest appearance on the "Tonight Show." The very fact that NBC used a printed form letter indicated that a great many people did express their displeasure.

NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY
Thirty Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10020

KATHRYN S. COLE
Manager
Department of Information

Dear Viewer:

I have been asked to acknowledge your letter and to express regret you were displeased with Johnny Carson's interview with New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison.

As you know, interviewers often assume the role of devil's advocate in order to elicit maximum information and clarification from the subject. This often, as in the case at issue, gives the appearance of disagreement between interviewer and subject when, in fact, the interviewer is not expressing any opinion. A careful review shows this was the case with Mr. Garrison's interview.

I can assure you that Mr. Garrison was not in the least discomfited by Mr. Carson's questions, and he left the studio in an atmosphere of cordiality. When he was asked by waiting newsmen if he had anything further to say, he replied that he had said everything he wanted to say on the program.

Thank you for writing and giving us the opportunity to discuss this matter with you.

Sincerely yours,
Kathryn S. Cole

One sentence of the letter deserves further comment. "I can assure you that Mr. Garrison was not in the least discomfited by Mr. Carson's questions, and he left the studio in an atmosphere of cordiality." This is true; however Garrison and Carson had quite an argument after the show, but it was Carson who left in a huff.